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FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6009
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 1524
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY 1345
RUEHQU/AMCONSUL QUEBEC PRIORITY 0800
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 1213

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 000829

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 8, TEXT)

SIPDIS

NSC FOR FISK
STATE FOR WHA/CAR
DRL
S/CRS
SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR LAC/CAR
INR/IAA
TREASURY FOR JEFFREY LEVINE

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [HA](#) [VE](#)
SUBJECT: ALBA AFTERMATH: HAITI SHRUGGED

REF: A. CARACAS 844

- [1](#)B. PORT AU PRINCE 773
- [1](#)C. PORT AU PRINCE 781
- [1](#)D. PORT AU PRINCE 819

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[1](#)1. This message is sensitive but unclassified -- please protect accordingly.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Summary: Media coverage and popular reaction to President Preval's return from the ALBA summit in Caracas (ref A) unsurprisingly focused almost entirely on the details of the agreement between Preval and President Chavez and what prospects are that Chavez might actually deliver. Of most immediate interest are Chavez' promises to provide a combined total of 160 megawatts of electricity (Preval focuses on the 60 megawatts he will save by using low-energy light bulbs) in Haiti and 100 percent of Haiti's energy (read gasoline) needs, though most media observers note that promises made by Venezuela to Haiti under the PetroCaribe accord, signed one year ago, have gone unmet. Haitians appear to attach no significance to the context in which Preval elicits these commitments -- Preval parading with Chavez' rogues gallery of ALBA leaders -- and evince virtually 0 interest in Chavez' regional agenda. End Summary.

And a Set of Kitchen Knives

[1](#)4. (U) President Preval on April 29 announced the following results to the press on his return to Haiti from Venezuela. The Cubans will replace two million light bulbs throughout Port-au-Prince with low-energy bulbs. The initiative will cost USD four million, but save the country 60 megawatts of electricity, which costs the country USD 70 million annually. Venezuela promised to repair the power plant in Carrefour, generating an additional 40 megawatts of electricity. Additionally, Venezuela will by December of this year build

new power plants across the country to add 30 megawatts to Port-au-Prince's electrical grid and 15 additional megawatts each for Gonaives and Cap-Haitien, all of which will use heavy Venezuelan fuel oil, a more efficient and less-expensive alternative to diesel. Chavez also promised supply 100 percent of Haiti's energy needs and improved the purchase terms. During his visit here last March, he doubled the Petrocaribe agreement allotment from 7,000 barrels per day (b/d) to 14,000 b/d (ref B). As Preval explained to the Ambassador in ref D, Chavez agreed to give Haiti a loan on 50 percent of all fuel that it purchases through the Petrocaribe agreement. Additionally, Chavez promised to build a petrochemical complex, a natural gas plant, and an oil refinery to refine the crude sent from Venezuela.

15. (U) Two Hundred Eight Five Haitian doctors returning from their studies in Cuba will work to provide basic medical care countrywide. Cuba will construct two basic health care centers in each of Haiti's 133 communes and one advanced diagnostic center in each of Haiti's ten departments. Preval announced that the equipment and materials for the centers are already available in Cuba. Cuba and Venezuela will help Haiti resolve illiteracy with USD 20 million per year for three years. The three governments will also open an 'ALBA office' in Port-au-Prince in the near future. (Note: During the discussions surrounding Chavez's visit to Port-au-Prince in March, Preval had referred to 'a tri-lateral cooperation office.' End Note.)

18. (SBU) Comment: The Haitian media coverage virtually ignored the ALBA summit's pomp and circumstance, Chavez' grandiose declarations, and Preval's own address. (Preval managed to be both brief and rambling, but did make a point of twice noting that Haiti was not a member of ALBA.) Though the extravagant promises and commitments that Preval announced on his return made for splashy headlines and news reports, most Haitians (including Preval himself) are already wary and skeptical of Chavez. They remember that Chavez promised them great things when Preval signed the PetroCaribe

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agreement one year ago and are well aware that there is less electricity throughout the country and that gas prices have risen since then.
SANDERSON